

January 2010

Texas **MERIT** **SHOP** **Journal**

Defending the Rights of Merit Shop Contractors



State Representative Todd Hunter Discusses His Views About Government and His Priorities as the Chairman of the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence

Also In This Issue:

Race For the Governor's Mansion

Perry Receives Endorsement from ABC of Texas

ABC of Texas Plans For The Future





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**CHAPTER CONTACT
INFORMATION**

ABC OF TEXAS

Jon Fisher, President
P.O. Box 1891
Austin, Texas 78767-1891
ph (512)470-5756
www.abctexas.org

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

David Ford, President
3006 Longhorn Blvd., Ste. 104
Austin, Texas 78758
ph (512)719-5263
www.abccentraltexas.org

GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

Russell Hamley, President
3910 Kirby Dr., Ste. 131
Houston, Texas 77098
ph (713)523-6222
www.abchouston.org

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER

Steven Schultz, President
10408 Gulfdale
San Antonio, Texas 78216
ph (210)342-1994
www.abcsouthtexas.org

SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER

John Bernard, President
PO Box 1566
Nederland, Texas 77627-1566
ph (409)724-7886
www.abcssetx.org

TEXAS COASTAL BEND CHAPTER

John Taylor, President
PO Box 2584
Corpus Christi, Texas 78403
ph (361)289-5311
www.abctcb.org

TEXAS GULF COAST CHAPTER

Terry McAlister, President
PO Drawer 2650
Freeport, Texas 77542
ph (979)233-1616
www.abctxgulfcoast.org

TEXAS MID COAST CHAPTER

Kathy Autry, President
116 Jason Plaza
Victoria, Texas 77901
ph (361)572-0299

TEXO CHAPTER

Raleigh Roussel, President
11101 Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75229
ph (972)647-0697

REGION 3 REPRESENTATIVE

April Brown, Regional Political Mgr.
2904 Windsor Rd., Ste. B
Austin, Texas 78703
ph (512)517-5661

ABC Texas Merit Shop Journal
3910 Kirby Drive, Suite 131
Houston, Texas 77098

(877)577-6ABC www.abctexas.org
Publisher: Associated Builders
& Contractors of Greater Houston
Exec. Editor: Jennifer Woodruff
Assistant Editor: Meghan Stephens
Account Manager: Janice Peters
Contributing Writers: Jon Fisher,
Meghan Stephens
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KOEBEL

Letter From the Chairman

I hope that everyone had a great Christmas holiday and is now ready to get back to work in 2010. Jon Fisher, ABC of Texas President, has assembled the results from the strategic planning session, held at the beautiful Texas Disposal Systems Exotic Game Ranch, which was presented to the ABC of Texas State Board. Following adoption of the final plan, we will begin working to further the interests of the construction industry in the state of Texas. Major goals for 2013 will be: to increase efforts in developing coalitions with other associations; to more effectively address the various issues important to ABC of Texas; and to develop closer relationships with the

state agencies affecting the construction industry. ABC of Texas will continue to nurture relationships with our legislators in Austin, as well as other elected officials across the state. It is important that we increase our members' awareness of these efforts, as it will demonstrate the important role ABC of Texas plays in our great state.

After careful consideration and a lot of discussion, ABC of Texas has now publicly endorsed the re-election campaign of Rick Perry for Governor of the Great State of Texas. Governor Perry has been a friend of ABC of Texas for many years and is deserving of this endorsement. In addition to this endorsement, ABC of Texas has voted to endorse Susan Combs in her re-election campaign for Texas State Comptroller.

Although the next legislative session does not begin until 2011, Jon Fisher will have a busy 2010. The primary elections will be held in March followed by the general elections in November, we will be working to support those candidates who support our issues. Along with Jon's efforts and those of our State Lobbyist, Mike Toomey, we will identify those races that need our involvement and the candidates who will support the issues that allow the free enterprise system to flourish in our society.

In a recent speech Governor Perry made over the holidays, he spoke of how Texas had the best business environment in the nation, and that Texas should be a leader in the recovery during this recession. Even though the business environment in Texas today is better than any other state in the country, we still have our work cut out for us and challenges ahead of us. We must stay on top of today's issues.

In order to further expand the progress we have made in our visibility, activity and influence in Austin, we will have to follow Jon's efforts during the 2009 legislative session with financial support in the upcoming elections. To do this, we need to increase the size of the ABC Political Action Committee (ABC PAC). There has never been a more important time in history to give to your local PAC, as those contributions support local, state and national efforts. Ask your chapter staff what you can do to help "Get Involved in Politics". This is something that every member should do. Your continued support will allow us all to keep and grow our businesses.

Andy Koebel

Kunz Construction Co., Inc.

2009-2011 ABC of Texas Chairman

For more information about ABC of Texas visit www.abctexas.org.



FISHER

Letter from the President

At our last ABC of Texas Board meeting, the Board agreed to support this magazine financially. Since the magazine's inception, funding to meet the gap between advertising revenue and production and distribution costs has been generously provided by the Greater Houston Chapter. The Board believes that this magazine helps

establish the identity of ABC of Texas and provides a means to communicate with internal and external audiences.

We will continue to rely on the human resources at the Greater Houston Chapter as we move forward. I mention this because we do need ABC of Texas members who believe in our efforts to support this magazine through advertising. The rates are reasonable and the magazine fulfills several of our goals.

Speaking of goals, this issue of Texas Merit Shop Journal contains an article based on our efforts to develop a Strategic Plan for the next 4 years. This plan is currently being reviewed by the Board, but it is unlikely that the goals developed at the September Planning Meeting will be altered. I do, however, anticipate some adjustments in tactics based on resources available.

One of our goals is to become as involved in the elections as we are in the legislative process. It does little good for us to advocate your interests if we are dealing with elected officials that do not support our principles of free enterprise.


To that end, the Board approved expanding the size of the ABC of Texas Political Action Committee. However, as I have written and will continue to state, there is more than one way to have an impact in elections. Our challenge is to become more involved as participants in the electoral process, not just financial contributors.

We will soon be identifying races in your area that could use some additional volunteer resources from our membership. From putting up signs, to hosting meet-the-candidate gatherings, to working in campaign headquarters, there are plenty of opportunities for ABC of Texas members to become more involved in helping the right people get elected.

I will be working with your Chapter Presidents to identify those races and opportunities for involvement. Please consider getting involved and helping create an even better business climate in Texas.

Jon Fisher
ABC of Texas
President

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Race For The Governor's Mansion

by Jon Fisher, ABC of Texas President

“Numerous polls have been taken, and the Governor’s 12 point lead in the most recent poll by Wilson Research is the exact same as the 12% lead he had in a poll that University of Texas released in July.”

same as the 12% lead he had in a poll that University of Texas released in July. Eighteen percent of voters are still undecided. If no candidate receives a majority of votes, a runoff between the top two finishers will follow in April.

Across the state, both Republicans and Democrats were recruiting candidates and preparing for battle as the January filing deadline approached. Filing for a place on the primary ballots began Thursday, December 3, 2009, and ended Monday, January 4, 2010. This election cycle is crucial to both parties since 2011 will be a redistricting year.

In the Republican Governor’s race, current U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison is running against current Governor Rick Perry. They have been sparring since her announcement this summer. Incumbent Governor Rick Perry has the strong support of the Republican base and is considered the more conservative candidate. Governor Perry’s endorsement list reads like a “who’s who” of Texas business and conservative groups, with examples such as Associated Builders and Contractors, Texas Chemical Council, Texas Association of Builders and Texas Association of Manufacturers. Senator Hutchison’s major endorsement is the Texas Farm Bureau. Both candidates will have close to \$10 million to spend if necessary. January and February will be a good month to be in the television advertising business in Texas! This will be an expensive primary season, but conventional wisdom has Perry pulling ahead of Senator Hutchison because he is viewed by the Republican base as more conservative. With Bill White in the race on the Democratic side, it will keep moderates voting in the Democratic primary and not crossing over to the Republican primary, which will also benefit Governor Perry.

Numerous polls have been taken, and the Governor’s twelve point lead in the most recent poll by Wilson Research is the exact

On the other side of the aisle, Bill White is the favored candidate on the Democratic primary ticket. Bill White is the former Mayor of Houston, and is campaigning on his record of cutting taxes and taking on the petrochemical companies to reduce pollution. If he wins the Democratic space on the ticket, November will be a classic Liberal vs. Conservative fight. You can expect White’s record to be compared to Perry’s. White’s record at the City of Houston includes a huge pension deficit, the crime rate, and a relentless attack on chemical plants and industry pollution (a major negative to ABC members who work in those plants). Mayor White also supports “Cap and Trade”. These liberal policy positions of Mayor White will all directly impact ABC members. By comparison, Governor Perry’s record is stellar on economic development, tort reform and less government regulation.

Although White is a strong Democratic candidate, no Democrat has won any statewide office in Texas from Governor to Railroad Commissioner, to Supreme Court Justice since 1994. This tendency to swing Republican should keep the office of the Governor in Republican hands. In the last Governor’s race, the Democratic candidate only got 29.78% of the votes, and down the ballot, in Chief Justice Wallace Jefferson’s race in 2006, he won with 76% of the vote compared to the Democratic candidate’s 24%.

The winner in November will directly impact the business climate in Texas for another four years. In addition, the fact that redistricting is on the plate means the results of this election could potentially set the political course for Texas for another ten years.

Gov. Perry Earns Endorsement From Associated Builders & Contractors of Texas PAC

Governor Rick Perry received the endorsement of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) of Texas PAC at a press conference held in Dallas on December 16, 2009. He also spoke about the devastating effects of cap and trade legislation being considered in the U.S. Senate. Two other construction associations, including Associated General Contractors Texas Building Branch PAC and the Texas Construction Association PAC, endorsed the Governor's bid for reelection as well.

"I am honored to accept the endorsement of these three groups, because they have devoted their lives to building Texas schools, office buildings and highways, just as we have worked to build a stronger Texas," said Gov. Perry. "Thanks to years of conservative leadership, Texas has a strength and stability that is setting the tone for the rest of the country as America works through some of the toughest economic conditions we've seen in generations."

Gov. Perry noted his concerns regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's recent ruling on the danger of carbon dioxide and language in the Senate energy bill that includes mention of a national energy code for construction. As it stands, authorities at the state and local level adopt energy and building codes that reflect local realities. The new code would not only preempt standards adopted by State Energy Conservation Office, but would also set attainment levels based on tainted science surrounding climate change, significantly increasing the cost of building projects across the state.

"The one-two punch of the EPA's ruling on carbon dioxide and the Kerry energy bill will put hundreds of thousands out of work and, as our President said, cause prices to 'necessarily skyrocket,'" said Gov. Perry. "Price increases include everything that is manufactured, transported or assembled using traditional energy, affecting the cost of everything including the construction materials Texas builders need to build homes, office buildings, and roads, killing jobs, raising the cost of living and stifling our economy."

Last week, Gov. Perry sent a letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lisa Jackson urging her to withdraw the EPA's recent ruling on the danger of carbon dioxide, especially in light of the recent "Climategate" scandal, which uncovered that data had been manipulated and destroyed in order to falsely show a preordained result regarding climate change.

Implementing regulations associated with cap and trade legislation would amount to the single largest tax increase in U.S. history, significantly increasing the cost of living for all Texas families, including an average increase in annual living costs of approximately \$1,200 per household. These bills would also cripple Texas' energy sector, costing hundreds of thousands of jobs and irreparably damaging both the state and national economies and severely impacting national oil and gas supplies.



Pictured above (from left to right) are: Paul Workman, Past Chairman of AGC-TBB; Governor Rick Perry; Mike Gremillion, Chair-Elect of ABC of Texas and 2009 Chair of the ABC Greater Houston Chapter; and Mackie Bounds, Chairman of TCA.

Instead of implementing burdensome and intrusive regulations, the federal government should follow Texas' approach to improving the environment by utilizing incentives to make alternative energy technologies less expensive, and removing barriers to innovation and competition. Texas' efforts have made the state number one in wind energy generation and a leader in other renewable energies including solar and biofuels. Texas' approach has also helped reduce carbon emission levels more than any other state except Louisiana and more than any other nation except Germany.

"On behalf of the more than 2,000 contractor members of the eight ABC Chapters in Texas, I'm proud to announce our endorsement of Gov. Perry for re-election," said Mike Gremillion, Chair-Elect of Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas. "We know that businesses must have a stable business climate in order to provide jobs. Gov. Perry has done his part to create a business and civil justice climate in this state that allows business to better calculate its costs and thus provide jobs to Texans."

ABC, with its more than 2,000 members across the state, represents commercial and industrial contractors who promote the principles of free enterprise and the merit shop philosophy.

ABC of Texas Plans For the Future

by Jon Fisher, ABC of Texas President



On September 30, 2009, approximately thirty ABC of Texas Board members, Chapter Presidents, and some invited guests from local chapters met to plan for the next four years. After about five hours, this group put together goals for the next four years, as well as goals and strategies for the next two years.

This group affirmed the mission adopted in 2006, but changed the vision. The new vision is “To be the most influential trade association in Texas impacting legislation and elections affecting the construction industry.” They also added a new operational guideline affirming our practice to “expect and uphold the highest ethical standards in all our activities.”

Looking four years out, the group picked the following as their top four goals for 2013 (in order):

- Increase influence in political arena
- Increase awareness of ABC of Texas to ABC members
- Become a leader in identifying issues and building coalitions
- Increase influence with state agencies

When the group was asked to set interim goals for 2011, the priorities changed slightly to:

- Increase influence in political arena
- Increase awareness of ABC of Texas to ABC members
- Increase membership to eight chapters in State ABC
- Become a leader in identifying issues and building coalitions

Of course, it’s nice to set goals, but the devil is always in the details. On September 30, the association also spent some time identifying the strategies that would be used to meet the goals, focusing on the near term goals for this plan. For example, to increase the influence in the political arena, they identified the following nine strategies:

- Maintain favorable business climate with redistricting
- Increase communications with non-ABC members
- Increase involvement in elections
- Increase legislative relationships (interaction and education)
- Increase minority involvement
- Increase partnerships with other groups
- Educate ABC members
- Develop issue expertise
- Work judiciously within process

Each of these strategies would be implemented with multiple tactics, many of which address more than one strategy.

The strategies identified to further the goal of increasing awareness of ABC of Texas to ABC members are:

- Create a better communication program to chapters
- Develop understanding of role of State ABC and State President
- Involve more members in State ABC activities

The strategies identified for the goal of the eight chapters in State ABC are:

- Make State ABC attractive
- Keep all chapters in loop/maintain communications
- Communicate a clear understanding of obstacles
- Demonstrate industrial value
- Better communicate value of membership

And, finally, they identified five strategies for the goal of being a leader in identifying issues and building coalitions, including:

- Develop key alliances
- Create opportunities for developing alliances
- Focus on common ground, not differences
- Increase member input
- Improve the process for involvement

During that same meeting, they also collected a long list of tactics to use in implementing these strategies—29 different tactics in all. Of course, as mentioned earlier, the devil is in the details. The Board and Chapter Presidents are all looking at the suggested tactics to determine which are achievable and which might take additional resources or not be a high priority.

Once this process is completed, hopefully by the January Board meeting, the Board will take a final look at our plan and approve it or send it back for more revisions.

The final strategic plan will also include a matrix defining responsibilities and deadlines, a chart outlining the time frames for each tactic, and a section on identifying opportunities to measure success.

While this seems like a lot of administrative effort, the purpose is to set the course, knowing the goals that need to be accomplished, and then get about doing it!



“DONE DEAL” IN 21 DAYS

Acquisition of Cravens Partners, Ltd. by Primoris Services Corporation

When Texas-based Cravens Partners, Ltd. needed fast-track results on a major acquisition offer, they called on the experienced legal team of **Andrews Myers Coulter & Hayes, P.C.**, and firm shareholder Patrick Hayes. Just 21 days later Cravens, a provider of civil and utility infrastructure construction services, became a wholly owned subsidiary of Primoris Services Corporation, one of the largest specialty contractors and engineering companies in the U.S., and was renamed Cravens Services, Inc.

Details of the deal include:

- Acquisition was completed on October 2, 2009
- Cravens Partners completed the deal for a combination of cash and Primoris common stock
- Primoris entered into an incentive program that could provide future earn-out payments based on attaining specified financial goals for the next 3-year period
- Cravens’ current management team, led by its founder William H. Cravens, will continue to operate the company

“When Cravens Partners, Ltd. was approached about a possible acquisition, we knew we needed experienced counsel on our side,” said William H. Cravens, president of Cravens Partners, Ltd. “Patrick and his firm responded quickly and were able to expedite the deal with the results we desired.”

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SAFETY: IT PAYS TO BE PRO-ACTIVE!

by Tom Quintero, VP Risk Management Services, IBTX Risk Services

I have been involved with ABC for approximately 18 years, and I currently chair the ABC South Texas Chapter's Safety & Health Committee. I believe that ABC has a tremendous number of resources available to its members. These services range from construction education, safety training, and OSHA/ABC Cooperative Safety Program, to legislative support and networking events, including awards and recognition for work performed safely based on number of man-hours. The fact is, our Association provides enough support to help its members be proactive in the way we handle our business and our workforce.

The reason I bring this to light is because of the increased activity we have seen from our OSHA Compliance Officers (COSHO) and the recent articles depicting the new leadership in Washington, specifically Department of Labor Secretary Solis. She has made it clear in several venues that she is an advocate for increased enforcement and reform. I believe that we are going to see a very active Secretary of Labor and thus a very active OSHA in the very near future. Her visit to San Antonio back in June of this year was to deliver a message to the Safety Community and everyone else who would listen. Her statement was clear and understood when she said, "Make no mistake about it, the Department of Labor is back in the enforcement business. We are serious, very serious."

This year, we have had the following activity as of October 2009:

Top 10 Federal Standards with the most "Willful Violations" Cited

1. 1926.652- Requirements for Protective Systems	83 Violations
2. 1926.501- Fall Protection	44 Violations
3. 1926.451- Scaffolding	36 Violations
4. 1926.651- Specific Excavation Requirements	30 Violations
5. 1910.146- Permit Required Confined Space	26 Violations
6. 1910.147- Lockout/Tagout	20 Violations

7. 1910.132- Personal Protective Equipment	20 Violations
8. 1910.119 Process Safety Management	16 Violations
9. 1910.212- Machine Guarding	14 Violations
10. 1926.1101- Asbestos	14 Violations

Top 10 Federal Standards with the Most "Serious Violations" Cited

1. 1926.451- Scaffolding	8,726 Violations
2. 1926.501- Fall Protection	6,283 Violations
3. 1910.1200- Hazard Communication	3,922 Violations
4. 1926.1053- Ladders	2,909 Violations
5. 1910.147- Lockout/Tagout	2,814 Violations
6. 1910.134- Respiratory Protection	2,618 Violations
7. 1910.305- Electrical Wiring Method	2,564 Violations
8. 1910.178- Powered Industrial Trucks	2,347 Violations
9. 1910.212- Machine Guarding	2,240 Violations
10. 1910.303- Electrical, Gen. Requirements	2,049 Violations

We should expect to see an increase in the number of these citations next year according to our new Labor Secretary. The real question at hand is what we are going to do as prudent employers to curve this trend downward. What pro-active measures will we be putting in place to minimize, mitigate or eliminate the potential of our company becoming one of these escalating statistics? How do we, as prudent employers become more pro-active and less reactive when it comes to potential OSHA Violations?

To start, we need to address the following questions in order to become pro-active in creating a safety culture within our companies. Who in our company is responsible for the Safety function, who holds them accountable, and who do they report to? Are we using all of the resources that are available to us as ABC Members? Are we taking advantage of the training and seminars that ABC offers its Members monthly or quarterly? Is my company a STEP (Safety Training Evaluation Process) participant? Finally, am I willing, as a business owner, to take a chance that my house is in order, or am I going to ask the hard questions and

demand that we become better than the average employer? You can see the results listed earlier when you are talking of just being average or below average as an employer in our industry.

When you look inward and ask these questions, you may be surprised at what you see. I can tell you that on the reactive side it can be much more expensive dealing with these issues, and many people in our industry can verify this fist hand.

I firmly believe that by being pro-active in our employee training, setting safety guidelines and expectations for our employees and subcontractors, holding our key employees and supervisors accountable for safety, and leading by example we will minimize, mitigate and potentially eliminate the issuance of OSHA citations. Additionally, this will help lower a number of direct and indirect costs to your company, improve your productivity, and push some extra dollars toward your bottom line. Creating a safety culture doesn't cost your company money, it saves you money.



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One on One With...

STATE REPRESENTATIVE TODD HUNTER

Todd A. Hunter is serving his fifth term in the Texas House of Representatives. He was first elected to public office in 1988 and retired from public service in 1997 so that he could help raise his three young children with his wife Alexis. In 2008, Todd was elected as a Republican representing District 32 composed of Aransas, Calhoun, San Patricio and part of Nueces County. He is currently the senior partner of Hunter and Handel, P.C. in Corpus Christi.

At the start of the 81st Legislative Session, Texas Speaker of the House of Representatives, Joe Straus, named Hunter as Chairman of the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence. As Chairman, Hunter oversees a committee that has broad jurisdiction over legislation pertaining to civil law, probate and guardianship matters. The committee has jurisdiction over all appellate courts in the state including the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Currently, Hunter also serves on the House Committee on Insurance and the House Committee on General Investigating and Ethics.

During Hunter's previous time in the legislature, he served as Chairman of the House Committee on Civil Practices and was a key player in important issues such as tort reform and education. He served on numerous important House committees including the House Ways and Means, Elections, Calendars, Urban Affairs and Higher Education committees. Additionally, he served two terms on the powerful budget writing Appropriations Committee where he was named chair of the Subcommittee on Education and as Vice Chair of the State Affairs Committee.

Born in Bartlesville, Oklahoma in 1953, Todd earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas in 1975 and his J.D. from Southern Methodist University. He has lived in the Corpus Christi area for almost 30 years where he met and married his wife, the former Alexis Taylor. They have three children: Todd Jr., 24, a recent graduate of Texas A&M University – College Station who is employed at Frost Bank; Michael, 22, a senior at Trinity University in San Antonio; and Christina, 18, a senior at King High School in Corpus Christi.

Q: Please describe your business and legal background:

A: I am a practicing lawyer. My law firm is Hunter & Handel, P.C. I have operated this business since 1992. I have practiced law since 1978. I am board certified in the State of Texas in civil trial law. I am the past president of the Nueces County Bar Association. My law practice involves representing businesses primarily in the mediation and/or litigation areas. I provide business consultation on business practices in the State of Texas. I am a member of ABC and in particular, the ABC Coastal Bend Chapter in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Q: What is your view of the free enterprise system?

A: I am a strong supporter of the free enterprise system. I believe that we need to support laws that keep the free enterprise system free and not restricted. I do not agree with socialized business systems. I believe individual and business involvement is the more effective way to achieve business goals.

Q: Do you view government as a friend or a foe?

A: I am a proponent of less government and limited government. I do not view government in any particular fashion but I believe the goal of government is to help and not hinder people.

Q: Is the tax burden on businesses too high, too low or just right?

A: I believe that in the State of Texas, we need to review and analyze the tax structure of our state. In today's economy, I believe that taxes are too high on individuals and businesses. I believe it is important that we look at new and innovative income sources. I am a proponent of reviewing and developing new forms of business in the State of Texas.

Q: The national economy has been faltering, what is your view of your state's economy?

A: The State of Texas has a conservative economy. Our state has done much better than many of the other states across the nation. The State of Texas has taken a good business-like approach in handling its economy. However, we must do whatever we can to promote our economy internally as well as externally. I am a proponent of developing the travel and tourism industry throughout the State of Texas. In particular, I believe we should make new efforts in developing the cruise line industry, especially along the South Texas coastline. We have a magnificent coast and a diverse economy, and we should strive to develop new income, job and business projects.

Q: What are your priorities as Chairman of the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence?

A: My priority as Chairman is to make sure that we review judicial and civil laws in a fair and open manner. We must strive to keep the laws of Texas fair to individuals and businesses. We will be reviewing issues such as arbitration, campaign finance law, and liability laws as they affect people and businesses throughout the State of Texas. My goal is to make sure that Texas is a state that is fair to all concerned and attracts others to invest in our state.

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

This fall, the ABC Austin Chapter held an auction at the Texas Disposal Systems Exotic Game Ranch and Pavilion in order to raise funds for the West Austin Youth Association. ABC Members and guests gathered for a BBQ buffet, bidding on items such as offshore fishing trips, University of Texas memorabilia, and a getaway for four to South Padre Island. Overall, the successful event generated \$25,000 for donation to the charity.

In October, the Chapter held their annual Excellence in Construction Awards at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Austin. Local radio DeeJay Ed Clements was on hand to serve as the Master of Ceremonies for the elegant event, which honored outstanding construction projects completed by ABC Members. Currently, the Chapter is preparing to initiate the new leadership for 2010.



Houston Mayoral Candidate Gene Locke meets and greets ABC Members 2009 ABC Greater Houston PAC Wine Tasting and Silent Auction.

GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

The Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Houston Political Action Committee spent this election season conducting extensive interviews of all candidates in the City of Houston Mayoral race, asking tough questions of each individual in order to determine which vision was in the best interest of ABC and the Merit Shop Philosophy. In order to endorse any of the four candidates, a two-thirds majority needed to be secured. As the votes came in, it was clear that the PAC was divided in their opinions of the diverse candidates, and ABC chose to stay neutral in the general election. The PAC also screened candidates in the race for City Council Representatives, which proved to be a lengthy process involving over seven hours of thorough questioning. Out of the eight candidates that the PAC voted to endorse, seven were winners in the general election. The City of Houston hosted five runoff elections in early December, and the PAC again chose to stay neutral in the Mayoral race. However, four other candidates were endorsed by ABC Greater Houston, of which two were winners.

The annual Political Action Committee Holiday Party was held on Thursday, December 10th, and included a silent auction and a live auction at the magnificent home of hosts George and Laura Pontikes. The guests enjoyed wine tastings while bidding on numerous prizes in the silent auction, and Mayoral Candidate Gene Locke along with numerous elected officials joined ABC Members for the memorable evening. The event culminated with the live auction of a trip for two to Napa Valley, eventually won by Christian Fast of Performance

Contractors. The evening raised approximately \$12,000 for the ABC Political Action Committee, bringing the PAC closer to their fundraising goals for the year.

The expansive METRO Light Rail project has been picking up steam in Houston, and ABC Greater Houston has been getting involved. When the Greater Houston chapter got wind that METRO would not be requiring Performance or Payment Bonds on the project, ABC contacted METRO representatives and contested the issue alongside other organizations, persuading METRO to abide by State laws and require these bonds. Recently, as a perfect example of how Associations can impact change and influence public policy, METRO has indicated that they will now require Performance and Payment bonds as a part of the Light Rail project.

The Greater Houston PAC is now preparing for their annual winter luncheon, to be held on January 21st, 2010. The afternoon event serves as election day for 2010 PAC Officers and Trustees, and will include a briefing of the current political climate as well as an overview of the 2010 Strategic Plan.

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The South Texas Chapter helped make the holidays a little brighter for a number of families in the region. ABC members collected all sorts of necessities and made financial contributions to prepare gift bags for the Wounded Warriors and their families at the Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston. The 300 plus gift bags were delivered to the Warrior and Family Support Center the day before Thanksgiving. The WFSC helps these heroes and their families make

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CHAPTER INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE



Members from ABC South Texas help collect toys, gifts and raise over \$25,000 for the Annual Construct A Kid's Christmas Gala.

the transition from the military to civilian life.

The ABC South Texas Chapter also co-hosted the annual "Construct A Kid's Christmas Gala" and toy drive to collect toys and raise money for the Friends of the Child Welfare Board so the foster children in the San Antonio region could have a Merry Christmas. 1,200 plus toys and gift cards were collected and over \$25,000 was raised at the gala, attended by more than 700 industry members and guests.

On the workforce development front, the chapter's construction education career ladder catalogue was published and distributed to ABC members and industry groups, promoting the various education programs offered by the chapter. As a result the chapter expects to see increased enrollment, particularly from new member prospects!

The chapter created a new membership recruitment video, highlighting why various members belong to ABC and the benefits they receive. What makes this video unique is the fact that it didn't cost the chapter a single dollar as it was prepared and produced by past chapter chair, and ABC National PAC Chair Michelle Seward Davis (Joeris General Contractors, Ltd.). She gathered together the chapter's executive committee and a few board members to record their thoughts about ABC and how it has helped them and their companies become more successful.

SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER

On October 29th, ABC held its 16th annual Outdoor Extravaganza/Member Trade Show. Approximately 2,400 people came out to Ford



The ABC Southeast Texas Chapter's Outdoor Extravaganza drew approximately 2,400 people who visited with 101 booth participants.

Park and bought extra chances to win over 300 door prizes, 14 guns and four pistols. A big thank you goes out to the entire Suppliers & Associates Council, Laura Kressman of Aramark Uniform Services, and Inez "Snoopy" Mauboules of Drago Supply Co., Inc. (ABC's S&A Council Co-Chairs), for all their exemplary volunteerism throughout the year, and outstanding job planning and coordinating this magnificent event.

In all a record 101 booths were represented in the Trade Show by members and various specialty companies. Additionally, our Chapter recruited many new members who recognized ABC as an important networking tool.

TEXAS COASTAL BEND CHAPTER

ABC Texas Coastal Bend brings 2009 to a close with a spectacular list of accomplishments including: awarding over \$20,000 in scholarships, raising substantial PAC funds, meeting and exceeding financial goals for each of the four major fundraising events, hosting the first 'Grillin' on the Playa' BBQ Cook-Off benefiting the Corpus Christi Harbor Playhouse Community Theatre - raising over \$8,200 for capital improvements, receiving the 'Corpus Christi Star Award' in the non-profit category from the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Governor Rick Perry's office, receiving an 'Excellence in Communications' award from ABC National, being recognized as the second highest contributing chapter to the ABC National Free Enterprise Alliance in Division 8, retaining 85% of members and recruiting 26 new members. In September the Chapter hosted its 8th annual Skeet & Trap Shoot with 21 team entries raising \$5,000 in scholarships. Top honors went to the Keetch & Associates' team; Hank Shaper, Charlie Martinka, Ron Lemke, Lee Delaune, and Mike Brink shooting an overall team score of 366. The Chapter is additionally proud to announce that the Craft Training Center currently has enrollment of over 270 high school students and 250 adults for the 2009 fall semester. "Because of the downturn in the economy, many workers are returning to upgrade their skills and receive additional certifications." says Dr. Anne Matula, CTC President. The Craft Training Center has also recently received two grants; a \$47,000 industrial trade grant from the local workforce commission for training of high school students and a \$150,000 skills certification grant from the state workforce commission.

With the challenges due to the economic climate, "Attention on Retention" is one of the primary focuses for our membership committee. Besides retention, the committee continues to recruit by developing our "Focus 25" list. The committee picked 25 of our hottest prospects to focus on for recruitment. As they recruit a member from the list, another hot prospect will be added. This allows the entire committee to work together to bring them on board as new members.

2010 will remain a politically active year for the Chapter. With the Governor's election in November, and the 2011 Legislative session just around the corner, the chapter's Legislative Affairs Committee will proactively continue to monitor Local, State, and National issues in an effort to serve the members. Celebrating with one of our newest member and ranked as one of ABC State's top legislators, Todd Hunter, will courageously continue to promote the Free Enterprise System.

The chapter is excited to announce the first female Chair of the Board, Jonna Davidson of Analytical Testing of Texas, for 2010. Davidson has been a chapter member since opening her company in 1989 and served on the Board since 2003. Jonna is the daughter of one of

CHAPTER INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE

the chapter's founding members John Davidson, J.M. Davidson, Inc. and has grown up in the industry. Jonna has hefty ideas for her year as Chairman and wants the Directors to develop a precise course of action to achieve the chapter's 2010 goals. With Jonna at the helm, we are expecting many great successes for 2010.

TEXAS GULF COAST CHAPTER

The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter has enjoyed a busy fall with activities including the 25th Anniversary Golf Tournament; the local Craft Championship; an HR Symposium on Generational Diversity in the Workplace, and the First Annual Joint Board Retreat with ABC, Contractors' Safety Council and Merit Shop Training. All this culminated, however, with the annual Christmas Social. More than 120 members and guests enjoyed an evening of fellowship, food, and karaoke topped off by a surprise visit from Blue Santa of the Lake Jackson Police Department, the group chosen to distribute the toys to children in the Brazosport Area.

Members of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter PR Committee, led by Toy and Food Drive sub-committee chairperson Laurie Groth, worked all year long on many projects for the community including the Christmas Toy Drive.

In addition to the Toy and Food Drive, this committee, supported by the efforts of the entire chapter, raised over \$5,000 in donations for the community. Various organizations benefitted from clothing drives throughout the year, but the following are recipients of monetary donations from the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter: ActionS Inc., Brazoria County Youth Home, Children's Advocacy Center, Home Delivered Meals, Live Oak Clinic, Women's Center, and the Pregnancy Help Center.

The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter is anxious and ready for 2010. The first annual Joint Board Retreat held in November set the stage with its long-range planning activities that included a facilities evaluation. Each Board followed up with goal setting for 2010.

TEXAS MID COAST CHAPTER

Keep Victoria Beautiful was pleased to partner with the Texas Mid Coast Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) to build Victoria's second entryway sign at the intersection of US Highway 59N and State Highway 185 N.

"Entryway signage is very important in developing community pride," says Joni Brown, Executive Director at Keep Victoria Beautiful. "And community pride translates into citizens taking personal responsibility for the appearance of the community." Moreover, this entryway sign is particularly significant as it is a green sign.

Mission Wall Systems Inc., ABC member and Master Distributor of Build Block Insulating Concrete forms for the coastal area, specializes in ICF (insulated concrete forms) wall installation and exterior finishes such as Stucco, Exterior Finishing Insulation Systems, rock and brick. ICF blocks are comprised of two inch thick expanded polystyrene on both sides with a cavity which will hold rebar reinforced concrete.

ICF blocks have embedded poly inserts every six inches to hold the blocks together until they are filled with concrete.

"Mission Wall Systems was pleased to have the opportunity to construct the community sign using sustainable ICF product as well as showcasing the exterior finishes possible using ICFs," says Ken Bunton. "Mission Wall Systems is proud to contribute back in a green eco friendly manner through partnering with ABC and fellow members on this community project."

ABC Pres/CEO Kathy Autry says, "Many members of the ABC Chapter joined together in the design, products, foundation, construction, time and efforts in partnership with Keep Victoria Beautiful to build this community sign. With 140 member companies across an 8-county area, the Texas Mid Coast Chapter of ABC has served the construction industry since 1982. We are proud to be an important part of our community and a link to constructing the future, because ABC cares." The value of contributions made by ABC Chapter members was \$8,500.00 in labor and materials.



The ABC Mid Coast Chapter partnered with the Keep Victoria Beautiful organization to build a new entry sign at the intersection of US Highway 59 and State Highway 185 North.



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